

The promises

BIG QUESTION

Does God keep his promises?



About 700 years before Jesus, Isaiah described a servant of God who would be “pierced for our transgressions,” numbered with the transgressors, assigned a grave “with the rich,” and who, after suffering, would “see the light of life.” A complete copy of Isaiah found with the Dead Sea Scrolls was made around 125 BC, so nobody can say the poem was written later to fit Jesus.

Many Jewish readers, following the medieval rabbi Rashi, say the servant is Israel. It's a serious answer, and Isaiah does call Israel God's servant. But this servant is innocent, and he suffers for his people, not with them.

One promise even came with a clock. In Babylon, the angel Gabriel told Daniel that from the word to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One (in Hebrew, mashiach: the Messiah) there would be seven “sevens” and sixty-two “sevens.” After that, the Anointed One would be put to death, and the city and the Temple would be destroyed. A “seven” is seven years, the way a dozen means twelve.

Run Daniel's clock

Work it out step by step (Daniel 9:25–26). There is no year 0: the year after 1 BC is AD 1.

1. 7 “sevens” + 62 “sevens” = _____ “sevens”
2. Each “seven” is 7 years, so $69 \times 7 =$ _____ years
3. The most common start is 457 BC, when King Artaxerxes sent Ezra to restore Jerusalem. From 457 BC to AD 1 is 457 years. How many of the 483 years are left to count after AD 1? _____
4. So the countdown runs out in AD _____
5. Jesus was crucified around AD 30. Rome destroyed the Temple in AD 70. How many years apart? _____
6. Daniel said the Anointed One comes and is put to death, then the Temple falls. Did Jesus come in that order, yes or no? _____

Answers: 69, 483, 26, 27, 40, yes

Memory verse

“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Isaiah 53:5–6

Fill it in: “But he was _____ for our transgressions, he was _____ for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are _____. We all, like sheep, have gone _____, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has _____ on him the iniquity of us all.” Isaiah 53:5–6

I can say it! ☆ ☆ ☆ Color a star each time you say it.

★ Bonus verse

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” Luke 24:27

Think it through

Answer in your own words.

1. Did Christians write Isaiah 53 after Jesus, to fit him? How does the Isaiah scroll answer that?

2. Some say Isaiah's servant is Israel. Name two details in the poem that point to someone else.

3. Jesus could choose to ride a donkey. Name a promise no one could arrange for himself.

4. Daniel's clock had to run out before the Temple fell. Why does that matter?

Talk about it

1. Jesus's friends didn't expect him to die and rise. Why does that make it harder to fake?
2. Which promise would you want Jesus to explain to you?
3. Read Isaiah 53 tonight. Who do you think it's about?



Watch the video

AD 70: Jesus